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MARRIED

FOR MONEY.

A DRAMA IN FOUR ACTS.

BY

MAURICE M. MINTON.

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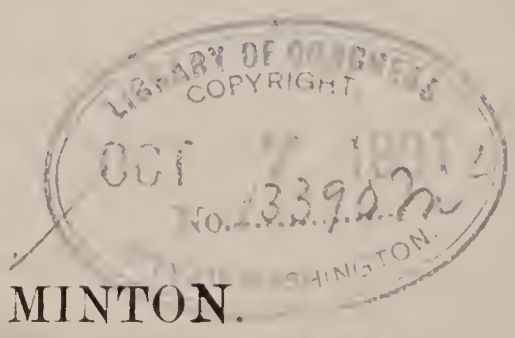

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ACT I.

The Breakfast Room in the Brockholst Mansion.

ACT II.

The Apartments of Mrs. Morton.

ACT III.

The Law Office of John Melville.

ACT IV.

The Glen Cottage.

TIME, - THE PRESENT.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

JOHN MELVILLE, An Attorney and Counsellor at Law

SOLOMON WRINKLE, Senior Partner of the late firm of Wrinkle & Brockholst.

RICHARD BROCKHOLST, Junior Partner.

FREDERIC LONGSTREET, A Stock Broker.

AUSTIN LOVELL, A Mining Engineer.

MRS. ETHEL MORTON.

MRS. BROCKHOLST, A Leader of Society.

MISS LEONIE BROCKHOLST, Her Daughter.

MISS ALICE BROCKHOLST, Godchild of Solomon Wrinkle.

Detective, Lawyer's Clerk, Two Serving Men, One Maid.

ACT I.

The Breakfast Room in the Brockholst Mansion.

R.—Table set for breakfast. L.—Large, open fire-place, 2 large easy chairs. Curtain rises on servants setting the table.

WILLIAM—Your mother always said, my lad, that when two idjits got tired of leaving good enough alone they'd go and get married.

EDWARD—Now father you don't think the young ladies idjits?

WILLIAM—By the Piper that played for Moses, do you think I lack such respect. But for that matter it's all the same in high or low, rich or poor; it comes to all like the measles.

EDWARD—How like the measles?

WILLIAM—Why, you knave, it's a *rashness* that's catchen; he, he,—Your sister Sal was always complainin' of the holes in the stockings, and now she is married and has the full of a basket every week. The young ladies won't have the stockings to darn, but its a far worse hole, these genteel folks have to mend. (*Impressively, slowly.*)—I tell you Edward there is many a heart-ache in trying to darn the big stocking, called appearances.

EDWARD—Faith father, if you haven't the heartache, yer think yer have, and where's the odds? Miss Alice's young man has no money, but loves the ground she walks on, while Miss Leonie's is rich as a bank, and as gay as a Frenchman; now who's heart do you think is reckoned to do the most aching?

WILLIAM—If a husband makes happiness, I reckon Mr. Lovell is more like to than Mr. Melville, who is a—who is a—

EDWARD—Farmer.

WILLIAM—What do you mean——

EDWARD—I mean he is a farmer, doesn't everybody say he is sowing his oats; but see, here come Miss Alice and Mr. Lovell.

Enter Lovell and Alice—Left door.

LOVELL—You are not angry with me for telling you how much, how dearly, I love you, Alice? May I call you Alice?

ALICE—Yes—Austin.

LOVELL—I should not have spoken, but when I thought of the possibility of not seeing you for *so* many months, perhaps years, my feelings surged up within me and I revealed how dearly I loved you, when I should have concealed it.

ALICE—Why, Austin—If a man loves a girl as you tell me you love me he has a perfect right to speak of it—in fact, it is not fair to a girl not to.

LOVELL—Ah yes, my dearest, but in these days the right of a man to make such a confession is biased by the world's cry "can he support her," and you know, love, the world does not take the answer, "not to-day, but I can before long."

ALICE—(*indignantly.*) Everybody thinks more of what other people think of them, than what they themselves think; I do not care what other people think of our happiness, but what we do ourselves—the richer people become, it seems to me, the more dependent they grow on their neighbors opinions.

LOVELL—Yes dear, because in this day when everything is measured by the guage of gold, the credit of a suitor is as much considered as if he were a buyer of merchandise and matrimonial arrangements are most easily effected when a lover of a young girl stands on a good commercial footing, and as for me, I am below such mention.

ALICE. (*archly*)—You are on a much better footing than some other men I know, who have a hundred times as much.

LOVELL—One hundred times nothing is—nothing; but dearest, I believe Melville will open my future for me, and when once I get a start, and the hope of having you as a reward for my industry, I will work like—like a man in search of a political situation.

ALICE (*archly*)—Will you favor home rule?

LOVELL—That I will—I never hope for wealth or fame nor a more than ordinary competency, but now with you to love I feel equal to any task, dare any obstacle and feel confident of success, but, you did not tell me you loved me?

ALICE—Was it necessary?

LOVELL—May I, (*leaning over to kiss her.*)

ALICE—Don't be a goose.

(*As he kisses her, enter William with a letter on a tray.*)

WILLIAM—Ahem, beg pardon, Miss. Here's a letter for Mr. Lovell—(*exit*).

LOVELL—May I open it—

"My Dear Fellow, I have decided to send you to Colorado, if you feel disposed to go on the terms we have talked over, viz: salary as agreed, expenses paid, one tenth of earnings. If you accept let me know at once. Yours,

JOHN MELVILLE."

By Joe, at last, I knew if you became my star a brighter sky would be above me—(*exit—exit*).

WILLIAM—That 'ere sort of love is nat'ral. (*Interrupted by the entrance of Mr. B, followed by Mrs. B.*)—Morning papers, sir. (*Hands papers.*)

MR B.—Bring up breakfast. (*Exit William.*)

MRS. B—Had we not better wait for Mr. Melville?

MR. B.—We have waited long enough, it is a quarter past eleven now.

MRS B.—These young men of fashion are *never* punctual, *what* is fifteen minutes? You seem thoroughly void of all policy, Mr. B.—— We must humor these young men—Heaven knows they are not so many——

MR. B—Quite as many as when *we were* married *my dear*, if not more.

MRS. B.—First of all, Mr. B.——don't dear me—and in the second place the times are very different.

MR. B.—Decidedly so, with some people.

MRS B.—That, I presume is an insinuation directed at me, if I have changed may I presume to assert it is for the better?

MR. B.—Certainly, assert what you will, I will not deny it; I have been a merchant and the commercial code says: Never depreciate your own property.

MRS. B.—I believe that maxim of the commercial code implies that I am a *property of some* value?—thank you—When you acquired *this property*, was it not also somewhat of a speculation on my part, based on your talents?

MR. B—A most favorable speculation I should think, if the figures in my check-book are to be credited

MRS B.—I presume they are; I never heard of your falsifying your accounts. But, I detest quarrelling, its vulgar—so let us have peace—I cannot comprehend how a man, a father of a family, can be so wanting in affection as to neglect the welfare of his children.

MR. B.—I was not aware that I did. They have had all that money could buy.

MRS. B—Yes, to be sure; but you do not show any interest in their settling down.

Mr. B.—Age will do that.

Mrs B—What, spinsters—single and lonely.

Mr. B.—Better than wives, doubled and troubled.

Mrs. B—If they are to be spinsters—why pray has so much money been spent on their education—for the last fifteen years the house has been overrun with teachers of French, German, music, painting and Heaven knows what else.

Mr. B—The time will come when the gabble, and idle chatter of *your* fashionable young men, will cease to interest the girls, and then they will meet agreeable men of the world, who know how to talk Their present education will make them intelligent and capable of appreciating the beauties of art and literature, besides giving them agreeable personal resources in the hours of absence from friends.

Mrs. B.—Bless me, I had no such education, and yet nobody thinks me ignorant,and as to your fiddle-dee-dee about art, literature, and absence from friends—you can read all you want in the newspapers and monthly magazines. It was only last night Mrs. Tattle told me how Dr. Twaddle complimented me on my knowledge of art.

Mr. B.—Indeed, what had you been talking about?

Mrs. B—At Mrs. Tattle's I joined a small group who were talking about works of art, when somebody made a remark about the Venus of Milo, the Venus of Medicine, and other plaster casts, I asserted my opinion that there was too much similarity between them—Mr. Green seemed surprised, asked me in what way, and I replied in the formation of the arms and hands, not wishing to say legs.

Mr B—Oh Heavens! my dear, (*laughs*) the Venus of Milo has no arms. (*Laughs.*)

Mrs. B—You may try to make me believe that, Mr. Brockholst, but I won't, it is nonsense for you to try to persuade me that any sculptor would make a figure without arms I am willing to admit that education is not to be neglected, but good manners, and the knowledge of how to select one's friends is more important. To retain them, perhaps the knowledge of art and literature is quite necessary—Nothing is so important however to a girl as to know how to keep up with her set, as for me I sometimes have led it, and have always kept up with the world.

Mr. B—Yes, and to the limits of my income as well—

Mrs. B—Ever since our agreement to bring up our two girls differently, that is, Alice according to your ideas, and Leonie to mine, I have endeavored to surround Leonie with eligible men.

Mr. B—We differ materially as to eligible men, I fear—for instance who do you consider an eligible man?

Mrs. B—Mr Melville—

Mr. B—If it were not for our agreement I would not allow him in the house—why Wrinkle says—

Mrs. B—It is always "Wrinkle says" he is the Blackstone to your arguments.

Mr. B—Well, Wrinkle says–

[*Enter W.*]—The day is too clear to have clouds in the house at breakfast time.

Mrs. B—"Oh, good morning; you speak of the devil and he is sure to appear."—only figuratively speaking.—

Mr. W—Naturally Madam, "when, ahem, (*coughs*) hell is being raised"—only figuratively speaking

Mr. B—My wife says she thinks Mr. Melville an eligible man for Leonie—

Mrs. B—Certainly; he has $20,000 a year, and goes everywhere.

Mr. W—How much more eligible would he be with $25,000 a year.

Mr. B—They would be to each other, says the social arithmetic, as is one-fourth to one-fifth.

Mrs. B—The escapades of his youth are not unsimilar to yours, Mr. Wrinkle, if tradition does not lie.

Mr. W—To an old man, Madame, the traditions of his youth always lie.

Mr. B—My good friend is in the seared leaf now, and is capable of looking back with regret to those indiscretions of the past which accompanied champagne and oysters.

Mr W—Your "good friend" would politely differ with you in regard to being a "seared leaf," and in remembering the past, regrets nothing, save perhaps, those "little accounts" for said oysters and champagne.

Mrs. W—We women are neither as great fools as you men think we are, or as you would make us. I came across a note of yours the other day, Mr. Wrinkle, in which you carefully instructed my husband to meet you at a certain place, at a certain hour, where you had ordered champagne and oysters, your note read further, "bring your friend in with you, by the side door, and the 'other little fellow' will will be waiting with me."

Mr. B—Oh, yes; that was the supper we gave Fred and little Phil. of Albany.

Mrs. B—Do not make matters worse by prevarication, Mr.

Brockholst; notes written in the manner Mr. Wrinkle wrote that note mean "the other little fellow is a she."

Mr. W—Of course, my dear Mrs. Brockholst, in the event of a champagne and oyster supper, the "other little fellow" is always a "she."

Mr. B—Hush—here come the girls.

Enter Leonie and Alice at——

Leonie—Good morning Father, good morning Mr. Wrinkle.

Mr. B—Later than usual.

Alice—Good morning Father, good morning my dear God-father, my lovely Crease. (*Kissing him.*)

Mr. W—[*aside*] She is going to levy a tax on her lovely Crease.

Mrs. B—You are very late Leonie. Mr. Melville has not come.

Miss B—So my maid told me. Something unexpected must have detained Mr. Melville.

Mr. B—[*to Wrinkle*] Won't you come into the study and look into this scheme of Longstreet's with me? [*exit.*]

Alice—[*crossing stage*] God-father, can I speak to you for a few minutes?

Mr. W—Hem—My dear—you have trained me so well that as soon as you say you want a few minutes of private chat, I can immediately guess that your pocket-book is purely feminine.

Alice—What do you mean by that? What is a feminine pocket-book?

Wrinkle—One, my dear, that is well extended, filled almost to bursting with—with samples of cloths, hair pins, pieces of paper, and in short, with everything but money.

Alice—You are wrong, godfather; I want something quite different; but before I tell you, you must promise not to tell. Will you promise?

Wrinkle—Yes; I suppose I must; how unhappy is the bachelor, old enough to be a great uncle, who is tied to the apron strings of his godchild. My dear, when I promised

to guide your little soul heavenward you smiled at me from the dominie's arms. You got a wrinkle in me and have played it for all it's worth. [*With mock severity.*] Have you broken a commandment or the whole dozen?

ALICE—No, godfather; I have not broken any this time; but there are only ten. I have fallen in love.

WRINKLE—Then be sensible and fall out, it won't hurt.

ALICE—Godfather, Pa told me you loved a young and very pretty girl once; you were too poor to marry, and when you did get well enough off, she had married another. If you had married, how much happier you would be now. You love me, don't you godfather; do help me and Austin and make us happy.

WRINKLE—My dear, your father will not consent. Austin is poor, and has no future.

ALICE—Remember, had you a future? if you love me, promise to help Austin, and father will consent before long.

WRINKLE—How could you make such a mistake, an impecunious drawing teacher?

ALICE—[*proudly*] He is a Mining Engineer.

WRINKLE—An undermining Engineer, I should say, acting drawing teacher—how did it happen?

ALICE—[*shyly, innocently,*] A long time ago he said he liked to talk to me, because he could draw me out.

WRINKLE—That was not the drawing he was paid to teach, however you wish to show your proficiency by drawing him into your family.

ALICE—I want you to help him on in the world. I love him just as dearly as you once loved that young girl.

WRINKLE—Think for a moment my child, of the change you contemplate; compare the delicacies of the table of your father's house with the boiled potatoes and hash of your husband's Nay, my dear, you probably won't have hash; hash, my dear, is a positive sign that the wife is frugal and skillful. Your training has unfitted your mind to conceive so economical a dish to be palatable.—[*Brockholst calls from parlor*]—But I must join your father now, and will see you bye and bye. [*Exit Alice and Wrinkle.*]

[*Servants clear table—Mrs. B. and Miss B. have been reading—exit servants*

MRS. B—If Mr. Melville offers himself to you, I hope you will have the good sense to appreciate the offer, and accept him.

MISS B—But mother, I do not love him, and how can I respect him?

Mrs. B—You are not expected to love him The days of Paul and Virginia are over my child, besides they did not live in New York. And as to respect, why should you not respect Mr. Melville? Is he not handsome, cultivated, rising in his profession, and enormously rich.

Miss B—Yes, but he is very dissipated.

Mrs B—All such men reform upon marriage and become model husbands.

Miss B—I do not wish to attempt the reform of a rake. Why should I get married. I am not anxious "to establish myself as you say" I am happy enough now, what will I gain?

Mrs B—As the wife of John Melville you will gain an envied position You will triumph over numbers of girls, who would marry him to morrow if they could. You will suddenly become a power, worshipped, envied, flattered, admired, talked off; heavens what more do you want?

Miss B—I have tasted the sweetness of this and like it, but there are times when all these things cease to please, when I see beauty to be pearl powder, pencilling and rouge, when the dance music is but the labored creaking and straining of instruments which yield their owners food, when the smiles and talk of the clever men are as shallow as the information they have acquired. Any how the men worth knowing seldom go out

Mrs. B—Nonsense. As a matron you see and hear every thing quite differently.

Miss B—(*sneeringly*) Why don't you say mother—that as a matron I should be allowed to listen and relate scandals and questionable stories of—

Mrs. B—I have no reference to the anecdotes you would hear, but to your position in the social world. You never have seen the fawning of people; the striving of the set below you to get up into your circle. This homage is the perquisite of a matron.

Miss B—There is one other thing; everybody knows Mr. Melville has been saved from ruin by a woman. Can he? will he? throw her off?

Mrs. B—Suppose he does not, what can it matter, you only the law recognizes?

Miss B—(*sadly*) Outside of the law, mother, in the sight of God. Is there a difference between the recognized and the unrecognized?

Mrs B—Hush, I see Mr. Melville. He is in the hall; I will leave you, do not be silly, child, if he offers himself

I tell you as your mother and one who knows the world, accept him. It is a splendid opportunity [exit Mrs. B.

Miss B—Ah, in the conventional life I lead, mother is right.

[Enter Melville]—Pardon me for not being here at your breakfast hour, I hope you will forgive me. I was unavoidably detained at my office; I went down town on some unexpected but important business.

Miss B--Certainly I am told you are a very assiduous worker now, I would not have tempted you from your clients, but then, you said you wanted to see me very particularly this morning Of course I was curious to know what about?

Mr. M--Can't you guess?

Miss B--Why attempt to guess. Why destroy the pleasure of hearing the fact. You come to reveal not to conceal.

Mr. M—Yes I have come to tell you something. We won't be disturbed here? (*Leads to the seats before fire.*)

Miss B--No.

Mr M--To ask you a question A question which men seldom ask, in a long lifetime.

Miss B --You almost frighten me, you are so solemn.

Mr. M.--It is upon a solemn subject, more so with me than with most men. As it is affected by circumstances, the incidents of my life, therefore let the answer be in accord with it I have been more conspicuous for folly than for wisdom--you look amused, pray do not smile—a proud man may know he has been a fool, but it is not over pleasant to acknowledge it You know what I mean by folly? No—then I will explain You have heard of my having been somewhat dissipated?

Miss B --Yes, somewhat (*smiles*)

Mr. M.—So I imagined--It is well to know these things. I dislike mistakes. I am no longer dissipated.

Miss B.—Ah, (*questioningly*)

Mr. M.—My cure was peculiar but effectual. How this cure was effected is unimportant. Life is extraordinary, and crime cured crime. To-day my social position is unimpeached, my prospects bright and I, I am ambitious of the future, I am the last of my name. I must marry, I come to you with the truth on my lips, and in my heart. I have broken some of the laws of God, my punishment is simple. The one I would marry is irrevocably witheld. Do not be startled. I cannot deceive you. I admire your beauty, your wit, your refinement, you manners, I admire your talents,

your accomplishments. I come with my fortune, and ask you to be my wife; you will never have cause to repent your choice, for I will be a faithful and devoted husband to you if you will be my wife.

Miss B—(*mockingly*) Oh, am I just the piece of furniture you want? how nice! Look well at your table. I suppose —? eh? (*laughing sarcastically*) Ha—ha—ha. Why, Mr Melville, you compliment me: truly you do. But do not, I pray—I do not like such compliments,especially when a man says in the same breath "the one I would marry is withheld from me"——

Mr M—(*rising*) You do not understand me. I approach you with the utmost respect, esteem—and—

Miss B (*interrupting*) Without love ——

Ms. *M*—I can never love, only admire—esteem. I should be proud of you You will become the most envied of the leaders of society,

Miss B—If a woman happens to be born well and wealthy, you men think she differs from all the other women by having no heart; you think women in my position must be induced to marry by offering premiums; have we no hearts to be won by the wooing? Why should I not be insulted by your proposal?

Mr M.—Because your education has led you to expect such offers; the world and your mother prepare you to accept such offers, but they are seldom so honest. Under the semblance of deep admiration and intense love, you as well as I, have seen money attracted by money, money buying position, and position alluring money. Few men, I imagine, have spoken of themselves as plainly as I have; I will not act the lie; I prefer to present the truth plainly; because I measure the quantity of my feeling for you do not believe it less than it is; it is most probably more, and I would have you love me fondly, yes, devotedly, if possible.

Miss B—(*mockingly*) Of course you would, all men would have women their breathless admirers--their servile and most unworthy slaves—(*sarcastically*) and you would even permit me to love you--ha, ha, (*sneeringly*) how kind of you--(*seriously, looking seriously at J. M.*) John Melville--you are called a clever man--but you do not know how to woo a woman—yes, even a society woman must be wooed--for she, even she is a woman. Some women idealize men and deceive themselves, others have no ideals, but instead have certain ideas of men grading them higher or lower as the case may be--of this class—am I. In

both cases the imagination acts. *You* (*emphatically*) would destroy the imagination. You forget that woman is sensitive. Her imagination affected by blunt truths, her sensitive nature shrinks and trembles. You destroy the slightest trace of an illusion.

Mr. M.--How do I destroy your illusions, or shock your nature ?

Miss B.--How—Can't you see (*excitedly*), blind man, then look--I am a woman--hence capable of loving--I have been shielded from the world, hence sensitive; I have been imbued by my mother with social ideas, hence ambitious You come and bluntly endeavor to crush any sentiment--You do not allow a woman's mind to plead love to her own heart. Frost bitten in the world, you come to me with its treasures to fan my ambition, and the chilling affection you offer checks that which might be love in me and makes my better nature shiver. Man, man, why did you tell me all, why did you not try to make me love you ? (*throws her head down.*)

Mr. M --I was true to myself--therefore perhaps, unkind to you—I believed you more worldly --I am very very sorry —since I cause your nature to repel mine I will leave —Do I understand you to say "*No*,"—Do you refuse me ?

Miss B.– No !

(*Centre door opens and a person is seen to listen cautiously*)

Mr. M.—You do not refuse me ? Then you will be my wife ? You will try to love me ?

Miss B.--Yes, I will try.

Mr. M.—(*leans over to kiss heer*) My wife !

Miss B —(*Gaily*) Not yet —(*draws back, offers her hand*) Till then you may kiss my hand.

Mr. M —(*Kisses her hand.*) Shall we not go to your father and mother.

Miss B --Yes, this way.

Longstreet--(*coming down stage, through C. D with long whistle*) If the straw shows the way the wind blows I see an ill wind here that blows no one good,and particularly myself.--Fool, fool that I am, to let this woman's cold, impassive beauty lead me to destruction.

END ACT I.

ACT II.

The Apartments of Mrs. Morton.

Furnished as a library—table, work-basket, fancy work, fire-place, books, book case.

MRS. M.—(*Working cushion cover, fancy embroidery.*) An angle here, a curve there, a cone here, a straight line there; a variety of angles, alternated by squares, dots, rings and single stitches, make up the design of this cushion cover. And life—its pattern is also marked in this irregular way—childhood, innocence, youth, affection, family ties, love, marriage, sorrows, joys, children, disappointments. How strange is the allotment of all that is good or evil in life. To some goes all that is good, to others all that is bad. Do we ourselves make the good or bad things of life, or are we born to them, or do the events mould us? I was young, loving, pure; and out of that good, through no fault of mine, what has come? One who would shrink from the recognition of mother or sister! Oh, better, better far, you mothers, hear cold, senseless earth falling in dull thuds on your daughter's grave, than carry the weight of a shamed and sorrowing heart for her who dead, yet liveth. Oh, these figures and fancies! I see in them, everywhere I turn, what I was and what I am; and yet, am I much to blame? What I am is not from choice. If it had not been for John, I should have long ere this been laid in some pauper's grave, unmarked, unknown, except in sin, and by God, alone. And why? Abandoned by husband, my heart broken, my baby cries for food, my brain in a whirl, and— No work in the stores for one so poorly dressed as I. I sinned, sinned for my baby's food—my baby—dead—dead; my reason shattered. Must I be judged for this? I plunged into the lethe of sin; I was whirled into the vortex of dissipation; I tried to sink memory; my soul was dead, my body dying. When John, John, met me, he took me away—into the country. "Come, come," said he; "let the past be as yesterday; it rained all day, and see how the sun shines now." I listened; he gave me love which bade me hope; but out of the horrid past rose the shadow of my own self, mingling all that can be good and evil in a woman, to kill my hope

of a future. My little one, my little one; had you lived—no—better, better dead; better be alone in this wintry world—yes, alone, alone—(*throws her head down, sobbing convulsively*)

Enter John Melville.—Why, Ethel, why, my girl—tears—tears; you tremble all over; you are so excited; what is the matter; what has occurred? Now calm yourself.

Mrs. M.—Nothing—nothing, John; I was thinking—

John. Of what?

Mrs. M.—My life—my life before I met you.

John—Well, my child, be more philosophical; when a thing is unpleasant to think of, turn your thoughts in another direction. Why regret the past and its troubles? Think of the present, the future and its joys.

Mrs. M.—There are no joys in life for me, John

John.—Nonsense. Philosophy should teach us that the saddest experiences of the past are but the heralds of a joyful future. Come, cheer up; see you have many pretty things here, or if you want more, or a change, or——

Mrs. M.—Do not speak that way, John; you are very, very good to me, and I love you for it—(*here John turns as if hurt in feelings.*) Oh, no; not for what your money buys, but your kind, gentle ways. See, you are many in one—father, mother, sister, brother, husband and baby.

John.—You should be pleased with your baby; I am a good sized infant—a prodigy.

Mrs. M.—You are a good, fine fellow, John—a little weak at times, a little too spirited for a fireside; except, John, except you had a pure, loving wife to sit by you—be your ballast, John.

John.—Why don't you be that ballast; I have begged you to be, time and time again. What prevents? Can I not break any legal obstacle—if there be any? We can go to some other State, some other country. No—always that mournful shake of the head You do not love me.

Mrs M.—Do not love you? Why, John—you know I love you, dearly, more than the heart of woman has a right to; my love is a worship, an idolatry. I love you more than anything on earth, in air, in heaven, except—except—

John—What?

Mrs. M.—A remnant of my past.

John—What is that—your mother, your father, your—

Mrs. M.—Hush, John; you forget—remember, dear, our compact. My past is a sealed book; its pages are those of sorrow; it contains much that is sacred to me. A man of

honor respects the seal and stamps on the curiosity which would break it. To all women and most men a corner of the heart should be sealed, for in it remembrances of love and of lovers are concealed.

JOHN—Ethel, have I not tried to respect your secret, though often sorely tempted?

MRS. M.—Yes, John; but in that past there is that (which please do not ask me), which may, even now, or at any time rise to confront me—I could not marry you.

JOHN—Why not tear away this barrier; why not sweep away that thing of your past which you refer to—or, or if it is of such a nature as to be amenable to the law, why not prepare to meet it? Cannot the law I read within these very rooms, the profession which only your influence could have made me follow diligently, now serve you in your troubles?

MRS. M.—What there is in my past, John, no law of man can indict me for; what wrongs I have done you know those, and the great wrong of my daily life I must answer to that Judge, who can read motive and act; that Judge, who will forgive the unforgiven, and pronounce the not guilty, guilty. That which does exist has made me what I am. I do not call down vengeance or justice, but forgiveness, as I hope for forgiveness. I have been branded by sorrow, and the seared mark will ever be upon me.

JOHN—You hide from me your past, you tell me sorrow is your portion, you tell me that the law is not your creditor, and yet that there is something tangible in the present out of your past which will not allow you to be my wife. If there exists a legal tie I can break it; but, there is a law I cannot break, which is superior to the written laws of men—a law upon which all the world sits as commentators, and then few agree. It is the divine law of heart, of feeling, of emotion, the law which binds, holds, sacrifices and suffers.

MRS. M.—Ah, John, it is that law which makes me suffer, and it is that law of love for you that tells me that you must be freed from me. Yes, I must sacrifice you; leave me, John, oh leave me. The days that are gone are like a song that's been sung, and its beauty is lost for ever more; but that beauty is sacred to me, between those days and these the barrier sorrow and sin arises; it was love turned to hate, joy turned to sorrow, and moral health to cankerous disease.

JOHN.—My conscience absolves you, for if you fell your temptations were stronger than you. Was I not fast going down the hill of life, down to ruin? What was I? When

we met our moral natures were on the same plane. Was I not a drunken profligate, courting dissipation, sapping my body of its strength, deadening my mind and falling deeper and deeper in the moral swamp, when you turned me from my ways and showed me a higher and better life? Come, now; were we not equal---equally fallen?

Mrs. M.—Not in the eyes of the world; in the sight of Heaven, perhaps; in the sight of man—no. What I was for two short weeks, society shuns, and rightly; and yet what I was, has always been and always will be. Why does God allow it? But you, society says, are just a trifle wild; Young men, they say, must see the world. Poor fools, who mistake the laughter of aching hearts for fun. Poor fools! Unkind, unchivalrous men, who joy in woman's sorrows; and, having seen this world, marry and become the honest fathers of pure and virtuous daughters. Oh, Nature, thy incongruities! We are not then equal—man says not, and my own being says not. Woman must be pure—would it were in mind as well as body—hateful sham where virtue is virtue by constraint, and not by right incarnate. I tell thee, love, and often, too, my love, my life is all for you; and yet I love you so, that I would not, even could I marry you; your children must be free of fault, no sorrow on innocence, no ill reflections on mother or cause to despise the father—from tainted springs impure currents flow.

John—You are too sensitive, too imaginative.

Mrs. M.—John, I have often beseeched you to marry; leave me; this life is not as the great Ruler ordained; it is impure, casts shame on me, and reflects ill on you. Marry—you will be great, your house the desired house to visit; your children—oh, John, you cannot conceive how a father's heart warms and glows at the prattle of his own baby boy, nor imagine the pleasure it gives to have his baby fingers pulling at your hair with little screams of delight, while his mother, your loving wife, sits by, loving both father and child, which are hers. Oh my lost, lost life, had I known you years and years ago!

John.—Ah, this can never be; my love is all for you. It is useless to urge you, your resolution is adamantine. I am successful in my profession, and I feel as if I ought to marry; you drive me continually on to it. This existence is as you say—unnatural. I will marry; I determined to marry ambitiously, since I cannot marry you, whom I love. I will make what the world will call a "good match." I will marry Miss B.

Mrs. M.--I am so glad, John, that you will marry; but—but I fear you are making a mistake. Marry a woman in your own sphere, but only because you feel fond of her. Ambitious marriages are but rocks which cause social catastrophes. Marry some pure, good, loving girl; there are so—so many of them.

John.—I cannot bring a loveless heart to a loving girl.

Mrs. M.—No, but marriage without affection is tyranny.

John.—True; but this match will be what the facetious call an alliance—mutual respect, united fortunes, independent actions; in fact, a matrimonial friendship.

Mrs. M—Will Miss Brockholst marry you?

John—Yes.

Mrs M.—I was in hopes Alice would be the one, from what you say of her; I think she is the more fascinating.

John—True; she is a child of nature, loving and throbbing with emotions I cannot respond to. I could love her as a father, or an elder brother. Young Lovell, I know, adores her, and as she always quarrels with him when present, and defends him when away, it is a proof that she does not altogether close her heart to him.

Mrs M.—Yes, he adores her! Happy man. I hope, John, that mine will turn out well for his sake; his future is to be developed by the results of that mine. (*Knock at door. Enter Maid.*)

Maid.—Mr. Lovell is down stairs, mam, and wants to know if Mr Melville is here?

Mrs. M.—Yes; ask him to come up. [*Exit Maid.*

John.—He should be more careful about coming here. You had better tell him he would think me jealous; some old woman will hear of it and fill the town with the news.

Enter Lovell—How do you? (*to Mrs M.*) (*To Melville*)—I am glad to find you; here is a note from Longstreet. [*handing note.*]

John.—Many thanks.

Mrs. M.—I am very glad to see you, but do you know I have some misgivings about your coming here during the day; you might be seen; some people might steal your good name, for I am considered dangerous to reputations; besides I know of a young lady who might take offence, and rightly, too. I should——

Lovell.—Do you think so?

John—Yes, my boy; you should be careful. Suspicions nursed by imagination, create steel-clad lies to riddle truth.

Lovell.—It seems to me that truth rather likes to be

riddled; it is the target at which old maids and old women hurl their shafts—the whiter the character, the better the mark.

MRS. M.—Come, come; I will ask you a fair question, and give me a fair answer: Is the club less gossipy than the sewing circle?

LOVELL.—Well, no; at the club we merely talk over the news, but at the sewing class a character is maliciously thrust with every turn of the needle.

MRS. M.—Poor, heathen men; I am sorry for you; women are so vastly below you that I sometimes wonder how you can condescend to marry us. What are you thinking about, John?

JOHN.—This note of Longstreet's.

MRS. M.—About stocks? Oh, John, why don't you listen to me. Woman has an instinct that is not given man; I fear that man Longstreet; please, John, have nothing to do with him—don't gamble in Wall street.

JOHN.—Longstreet is an honest fellow; you do him an injustice; he writes me of orders I gave him, about stocks, bonds, etc. I have put in your name to be used when—when I leave you to be married; here is the receipt.

MRS. M.—Oh, are we so near the end—must we part soon?

JOHN.—Yes; in a day or so, or—Ethel, I will never leave you—must I go—do you bid me go?

MRS. M.—Yes—oh, oh, (*cries*). Yes, *you must* go! It must be so. How hard to lose you; John, John, I love you so! (*weeps hysterically*)

JOHN.—Come, let us go (*to Austin*). We will leave you; I will return later (*Leans over and kisses her and moves up the stage.*)

MRS. M.—John—(*calling*)—John——

JOHN.—What, dearest?

MRS. M.—(*Throws herself on him, arms about neck.*) Kiss me.

JOHN.—(*takes her back and leaves her in chair at table.*) Good-bye. [*Exit.*

MRS. M.—Good-bye (*weeping*). Good-bye, forever.

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

The Law Office of John Melville.

Curtain rises on Clerk arranging papers on desk, &c.

CLERK.—Something is wrong, Perkins, my boy; something is wrong in this office, you can depend upon that. I heard Mr. Longstreet say "it fell off eleven points," and "closed very weak." Why, my lad, it is not law, there are only nine points in law. "Closed very weak." Who closed very weak? I wonder if it's the chief?

Enter Longstreet.—Mr Melville down yet?

CLERK.—No, sir; expect him in every minute.

LONGST.—Have you a morning paper?

CLERK.—(*Hands paper.*) The *Herald*.

LONGST.—How do you like this red-tape business? (*Reads paper.*)

CLERK.—Very well, sir, as long as that white-tape shop in Broad street sends us customers, for if they step in there first, it isn't long before they call on us. [*Exit Clerk.*

LONGST.—(*Lights cigarette, sits on desk*)—That combination rather did the business. He can't suspect; and yet if he should—why is it I must always be a Judas? I like Melville; good fellow, Melville; but why in the deuce must he run across my bow? Why did he not ruin himself speculating? But he's been confoundedly lucky instead. If he had only ruined himself, I would not have had to lay a pitfall for him It must be destiny. If I have ruined him completely, which I think I have, his engagement to Miss Brockholst will be broken off I will step in, marry her, and—and if that little affair of seven years ago crops up, my dear Mr. Longstreet, your sphere of usefulness will be transferred from the Street by the State's kindly aid, to the shoe shops of Sing Sing. Oh, women, women! from the time of Eve to Leonie, you have tempted men with forbidden fruit, until the entire world suffers a moral indigestion. Begad, I am getting poetical, eh, romantic. I arrive in New York penniless, find money power; I forget my past, and stab a friend by taking his money, the only death felt here. And now I am eager to marry a woman because—because—

I am infatuated What a fool! what a fool! Oh, here it is (*reads*): "It is rumored that the great and sudden depreciation in R. R. securities for the past week has seriously embarrassed many well-known merchants, who were tempted by the advance movement of a month ago, to try a 'flyer' in the uncertain financial pool of Wall street. The steady depreciation has at last struck those outsiders who, having vainly hoped for a reaction in prices, are now compelled to sell their securities and are left floundering in troubled waters. The failure of John Melville, Counselor at Law, to meet his obligations, occasioned by heavy losses in coal stocks, was extensively reported late yesterday afternoon His brokers state, however, their entire confidence in his ability to settle in full for his losses within a few days." Confound it, I thought that reporter would make it worse; I gave him facts enough to burst a National bank

Enter Melville.—Ah, Longstreet, here you are; so it's all in the papers?

LONGST.—How do you suppose they got hold of it? What do you propose doing?

MELVILLE.—Convert my assets into cash, paying dollar for dollar. My creditors will allow me a short time to sell to better advantage, if I comply to certain propositions, which I have decided to do. However, I will have a small surplus; I am not totally ruined, only hard pressed for money at the present time.

LONGST.—Why don't you sell that mine: I might raise a few thousand dollars for it.

MELVILLE.—Who would buy it? Nobody wants it. No, young Lovell has faith in it; but he is young. I will not sell it yet awhile, or rather not till he gives it up.

LONGST.—But it costs so much to run. I will get a bid for it if I can. Will you take $25,000. (*Aside.*) If he knows what I do, $250,000 would not buy it.

Enter Clerk with telegram.

MELVILLE (*reads, aside*): "Struck fine ore Monday; great excitement; another bonanza; will telegraph developments Austin Lovell." I wonder if Longstreet knows anything of this?

LONGST.—What's up—anything important?

MELVILLE.—No.

LONGST.—I will see what I can do about getting you a bid.

MELVILLE.—I don't want a bid; I will not sell. Ah, good morning.

Enter Mr. Wrinkle.

LONGST.—Ah, good morning. Good day. [*Exit.*

WRINKLE.—The higher up in the profession you lawyers rise, the further up-stairs your clients have to climb. I have dropped in, at least climbed in, for a moment

MELVILLE.—Well, sir; you have perhaps read of my troubles

WRINKLE.—Yes, my young friend, and if you had taken an old fool's advice—old men are always said to be old fools—you would not have been in this fix to-day. I did not come, however, to tell you how this disaster might have been averted, others will do that, but to talk over a little business quietly.

MELVILLE—Ah.

WRINKLE.—I was once caught myself and I found the whole community had prophecied my ruin. I also found that by being pressed for settlement, much property had to be disposed of, much below its value, to meet my creditors' claims. Having no wife, I have managed to lay up a few dollars, which I am willing to loan you on your securities until they can be sold at such figures as their true value demands.

MELVILLE.—This is truly noble of you, Mr. W., as I have not been a particular friend of yours.

WRINKLE—True. Had I been a particular friend of yours, I should have been too much pressed myself personally to assist you—*this* is the way of particular friends.

MELVILLE—I am afraid so; it seems that adversity is like a fire, charing what it does not consume, and changing the entire nature of that which was placed to the test; however, I find pure gold in you, and perhaps will in others.

WRINKLE.—Do you think Miss B. will be pure gold?

MELVILLE.—My dear sir, really; since I have had confidence enough in her to ask her to be my wife, I surely must have sufficient confidence in her character not to question her now.

WRINKLE.—True; so you should; but still do you think she will stand the test, will she char, turn to ashes, or be pure metal?

MELVILLE.—I entertain too high an opinion of Miss Brockholst to think she would break our engagement without a plea other than my loss of fortune. Indeed, that would be—would be—indelicate, unmaidenly.

WRINKLE—Even so; but Providence wisely provides that all maidens shall have mothers. Now, the mother of this

century is a special creation, affording a system of offense and defense for the beautiful princess, before which pale the defences of past ages. Moreover, the mother in matrimonial politics is a natural diplomatist. Miss Brockholst is the daughter of Mrs. Brockholst simply, and as such must do what dear ma says. Now what will dear ma say?

MELVILLE.—How can I tell? Miss Brockholst is a woman old enough to judge for herself.

WRINKLE.—Ah, well, if I cannot shatter your faith to meet the contents of this letter (*hands letter*). I hope it may not, thereby destroying my suspicions that your faith is ill-founded.

MELVILLE.—My dear sir, I sincerely hope your suspicions are ill-founded. I will open it with your permission (*opens, reads*): "My dear Mr. Melville. By to-day's newspapers I learn your misfortunes have become known to the world. The news will certainly surprise many persons. I have been aware of the critical condition of your affairs, and I have for the past week daily expected you to inform me Considering that marriage was so soon to join our destinies in common, I think I was entitled to have learned of your troubles from you. You would have received my warmest sympathy, for truly I am very sorry for you. With your abilities and influential friends the world will yield to you in time more than your present losses; however, as it would be inexpedient for you to enter into this contest encumbered by a wife, I think it would be well for us to renounce our projected union. Do not think harshly of me, but always consider me your friend Leonie." Egad, sir; this is a note of sympathy, breathing tenderness and self-denial, whispering subtle words of encouragement, tinged with a flattering tribute to my talents and abilities. Read, read, Mr. Wrinkle (*hands letter*), and see the flimsy mask of fabrication by which compromising motive seeks to maintain a semblance of dignity in the presence of society.

WRINKLE.—A well-told lie, young man, society must accept, else it would be disintegrated by objectionable truths. (*Reads.*) As I expected. Had it been my little Alice, your troubles would have brought her flying to you, overpouring with love and unselfish sympathy. (*Continues to read.*) The translation to this conventional epistle sounds rather harsh, it read: your money, my good sir, having taken wings, I am sorry for you; but business is business, and I am expensive.

MELVILLE.—What does she mean by "I have been aware

of the critical condition of your affairs"? How could she—did you?

WRINKLE.—No, I did not; she did. The knowledge of evil was first communicated to woman.

MELVILLE.—But how could she know?

WRINKLE.—Probably Longstreet entertained her with interesting little facts about the ebb tide in your affairs.

MELVILLE.—Oh, no; Longstreet is my friend.

WRINKLE.—Pardon me; two men, young man, never court one woman and remain friends.

MELVILLE.—I never suspected for a moment he admired Miss Brockholst.

WRINKLE.—Evidently not. I did. I said, here is a war of the tables; I will watch the white knight (that is Longstreet) go for the red knight's fair enslaver; the red knight (that is yourself) filed no demurrer, the white knight was a determined bull; so I sold short on the red knight. I am always a bear on humanity; I saw legal acumen eclipsed by Wall street shrewdness.

MELVILLE.—If he has acted the knave with me there, he may have in business.

WRINKLE.—More than likely. As a lawyer you are a hunter of loopholes; this time you have discovered a noose, but only too late to learn that you have been hung by it by the amiable Mr. Longstreet.

MELVILLE.—Then you believe him a villain? Have you any reasons?

WRINKLE.—Many; a word to the wise is sufficient; be cautious; I will aid you all I can; I must go now. Good-day. [*Exit.*

MELVILLE.—(*Sits down at desk.*) I have been duped, that's evident; but to business. These are from clients evidently afraid their property is endangered. Let a man be unfortunate, and the world believes him a swindler. These from professed friends, expressing condolence mingled with curiosity. Let a man be unfortunate and his friends become immediately curious to learn what may be saved from the wreck before utterly discarding him. (*Knock at door. Enter Clerk.*) Come in.

CLERK.—Mr Brockholst and a lady would like to see you, sir.

MELVILLE.—Show him in. Who can the lady be?

(*Enter B. and A.*) —I have come in for a moment, Melville, and as Alice insisted upon coming, you see her also.

ALICE.—I told father I would come, and I have.

MELV.—(*To Alice.*) So it seems. I am glad to see you, I am sure. (*To Mr. B.*)—Is it about anything in particular?

BROCK.—Yes.

MELV.—(*To Alice.*) Will you be kind enough to come in here for a few minutes? (*Shows small room door to right.*)

ALICE.—Certainly—(*aside*). I want to have a little chat, John.

MELV.—(*To her.*) All right (*aside*). About Lovell? (*To Mr. B.*) Pray, be seated.

BROCK.—Thanks. I am very sorry to hear, my boy, of your misfortunes, and I regret extremely that my daughter —my daughter——

MELV.—Should throw me over?

BROCK.—Yes. I was opposed to you at first; but now that I know you, I like you and regret this marriage is not to be. I wished to explain to you that I have no influence with Leonie; her mother is her adviser; that was the agreement; so I had nothing to say when I learned that Leonie had written to you.

MELV —This morning's experience has shaken my faith in many things; also in women of the higher classes, where might be expected to be found a loyalty in keeping with such station.

BROCK.—Ah, yes; 'tis sad; but are you as badly crippled as the papers state?

MELV.—As yet, 'tis almost impossible to tell.

BROCK.—Oh, you will get out better than you believe; failure comes prior to success, so do not be disheartened. But it is late. Alice—(*calls.*)

MELV.—She has a word to say to me, about Lovell, I imagine; so give her five minutes.

BROCK.—Very well; I wait in the carriage. Good-day.

MELV.—Good day. That door—Now for it—(*To Alice.*)

ALICE.—Oh, John, I am so sorry for you; I think Leonie just hateful to treat you so; I would not let Austin go that way. Will Austin have to come back? He thinks the mine so promising. Mr. Longstreet has been writing to Austin about the mine.

MELV.—Has he? And what does Austin say?

ALICE.—He says he is suspicious of Mr. Longstreet, and thinks Mr. Longstreet wants to buy it of you.

MELV.—Indeed! Well, I won't sell it, and Austin shall keep his position.

ALICE —I am so glad; I will write to him. I must run, or pa will scold me. Good bye.

MELV.—Good bye. Such a girl is worth a fortune. The only woman who ever cared for me was Ethel. It is well that my troubles came after I settled a competency on her—and this (*showing letter*) is all I know of her now. Poor, dear girl! How her sorrows, which she would not tell me of, threw their shadows across her sweet face. And these lines, written by a hand trembling with emotion, are blurred with her tears. Ah! I wonder if she has seen the account of my misfortunes. (*Reads*) "Dearest John, when you come here this evening and find this note, I will have fled never to return. Not until the hour of parting was upon me did I know how hard the sacrifice was to bear. About you, oh John, my only interest in this great, crowded world revolve; and even that my conscience denounces. If I do not leave you now I may never have the courage to. I am a temptation to you, John, which is positive ruin. I go to a place where I can hear and see you grow great; in your sorrows I shall have the deepest sympathies, for I love you, love you so. I forbid you to speak to me should we meet, to search for me if you feel inclined; for John, we must live seperate lives. Good-bye, my darling, forever, forever. Your devoted Ethel." Poor girl——

Enter Ethel. Rushing in, or covering eyes, and kissing from behind—Oh, John.

JOHN.—My darling. (*Embraces her.*)

MRS. M.—In trouble, my old boy? I ought not to be here, but I could not help coming. Will you forgive me?

JOHN.—Forgive you—for what?

MRS. M.—For coming here. I thought the money you gave me might help you now. Take away your arms; you are to be married.

JOHN.—Oh, no; that is broken off.

MRS. M.—Why, certainly not because you lost your money?

JOHN.—Yes.

MRS. M.—Heartless woman. Better so, John; there can be no happiness where there is no love.

JOHN.—Happiness can only come to me through you. Why will you not marry me?

MRS. M.—The old question. No; it is impossible. But won't you take my money; it will assist you greatly.

JOHN.—No, dearest, I will not; you need it more than I.

MRS. M—Oh, no; I must occupy my time so I have been keeping a large summer boarding house.

[*Knock at door. Enter Clerk.*]

CLERK.—Mr. Longstreet, sir.

JOHN.—Ask him to wait a moment.

MRS. M.—Do you still associate with that man? I have a a dread of him.

JOHN.—I fear I have discovered, too late, your fears are not groundless.—Can you wait a little while till I see him?

MRS. M.—Certainly.

JOHN.—Then come in here (*Shows door to right. Rings. Enter Clerk.*) Show Mr. Longstreet in.

Enter Longst.—What do you suppose, old man, I have an offer.

JOHN—Have you? How much? Who from?

LONGST.—$45,000—but the purchasing company do not wish to be known at present. So I agreed to propose a plan to you, to take the mine at that figure, and deliver the title in sixty days to them.

[*Enter during this speech Mrs. M., who moves slowly in, recognizes Longstreet, advances as if to denounce him, but staggers back silently from whence she came*]

JOHN.—Hum; how much will you clear by the operation?

LONGST.—Nothing—I only want to befriend you.

JOHN.—I am sorry to hear you say that, that is always expensive. I have had to pay pretty high prices for being befriended.

LONGST.—What has got into you—you almost insult me.

JOHN.—Almost? I should be happy to insult you altogether.

LONGST.—Melville, be careful. I am your friend—do not let your troubles turn your head.

JOHN.—[*Sarcastically.*] I have proofs of your friendship. I have had faith in you when—and yet I never met a person who knew you ten years ago. By the way, who are you? Where do you come from Mr. Longstreet? I suppose you have a history, eh, Judas? [*Rings bell.*]

LONGST.—You shall repent this, sir; you shall repent. [*Rises, in anger, to go.*]

JOHN.—Of repenting we shall see who will do the most. [*Enter Clerk.*] Show that man the door.

END ACT III.

ACT IV.

The Glen Cottage.

Scene—Porch, or doorway of a house. Flower beds, rustic chairs, trees, etc. Curtain rises on Alice, seated to r. of stage and Lovell talking to her.

LOVELL.—Am I glad to be east again? I should say so. There was not a petticoat within two hundred miles of the mine. Why, the most determined woman-hater in the world would hunger to see a woman, if he was out among those rough lads for only a few months. When we struck that big vein, and I called it Alice after you, the miners drank to the belle of the camp.

ALICE.—I suppose you named it after me, that you might pick it to pieces. Did they ask you why you called it Alice?

LOVELL.—Yes, but before I could answer a young Irishman spoke out, saying: "Faith, boys, why do you ask such a question? Isn't it vain and attractive enough to be called after a woman?" I shall call everything I want to be lucky, after you. Just to think that I am well off now, and Melville is richer than ever. What a time we will have spending it.

ALICE.—When we are married, I can spend it just as I like, can't I?

LOVELL.—Won't you commence now?

ALICE.—Do not be in a hurry, my young man. All women have to wait so long before they get a husband, that they do double execution when they get married. Let us go for a sail on the lake. [*Exit, both.*]

Enter Mr. Brockholst and Mrs. Brockholst at r.

MRS. B.—If I had not been so economical you would not be the millionaire you are now, Mr. Brockholst.

MR. B.—How you got the idea into your head that you have been economical, I am at a loss to imagine.

MRS. B.—Of course you don't; you would not admit it if you did. I see your object—you wish to quarrel, and there

end the matter. But I will not. I wish $7,000; will you or will you not let me have it?

Mr.B.—If you will tell me for what purpose,yes; If not,no.

Mrs. B.—Very well, you shall regret it. [*Walks off. Aside.*] I am afraid I will have to tell him, and he will think I have been a fool. [*Exit.*]

Mr. B.—I imagine she has been speculating, and has been cornered. She is now too proud to tell me, for she has been preaching, for the last twenty years, about what she would have done if she had been a man. (*Exit*)

Enter Longstreet and Miss Brockholst.

Miss B.—That basket of fruit was delicious; How good of you to have thought of me.

Longst.—I have other thoughts about you, which I wish were as acceptable as the fruit.

Miss B.—Perhaps they are—but, not having heard them, how can I tell? Do you like this hotel—I do.

Longst.—Yes, the air is delightful up in these mountains. I was thinking this morning that I have known you for about some years.

Miss B.—You should not tell me so. Age is on the side of man, but against woman.

Longst.—Not against a lovely woman like you, who has a string of worshippers at her feet.

Miss B.—You deceive yourself. I am a maiden all forlorn. I have not a single worshipper.

Longst.—You have me—

Miss B.—No—have I? Interesting revelation. But pray you, sir, since when this adoration?

Longst.—Before Mr. Melville was engaged to you.

Miss B.—Indeed! And did you care for me then?

Longst.—Yes; I would have been jealous of him, had not been I felt myself unworthy of you.

Miss B.—You surprise me; I might believe you admire me, but your humility—that's comical. (*Laughs.*) Forgive me for laughing, but it's so funny.

Longst.—Would it be equally funny if I told you that I came up from New York to ask you to be my wife—will you be my wife? Do you not care a little for me?

Miss B.—I don't know; leave me now, and I will tell you to-morrow.

Longst.—May I hope? Good-bye. Good-bye till to-morrow. (*At back of stage he meets Mrs B. He says*): I have asked her; she is undecided; I shall rely upon you to make her decide.

Mrs. B.—You seem agitated. I hope you have not refused Mr. Longstreet; he is perfectly devoted to you; and you are getting along in years, my dear; you must not forget that. He is such a nice young man, and then he has a fortune—quite a catch, I am told.

Miss B.—You always think any young man of fortune nice, mother; I listened to your wishes concerning Mr. Melville; that affair has hardly ceased to interest our gossiping friends, when I must again be plunged in matrimony. Why? Simply that I may not be an old maid. I do not consider Mr Longstreet a catch. Who is he? What is he? An unknown man of fortune. He says himself his family were very simple people.

Mrs. B.—He is a natural gentleman; he is working his way up in society; he gives the most charming dinners and theatre parties, and in a few years no one will hold a better position than he. I have made up my mind that he is the only man I shall give you my consent to marry.

Miss B.—A short time ago it was Mr. Melville; then I complied to your wishes; this time it is Mr. Longstreet, now I shall comply to my own.

Mrs. B.—Do you propose to reject him?

Miss B.—If I feel inclined—remember if——

Mrs. B.—You are still undecided, then?

Miss B.—Yes; if you have nothing more to say, I shall go to my room—(*leaves her shawl behind her.*)

Mrs. B.—Nothing (*exit L.*) If I urge her too strongly she will resist me; I must persuade, not drive. [*Exit.*]

(*Enter W. and M.*)

John.—Have you any confidence in this report about Longstreet?

Wrinkle.—As much as I have that my name is Solomon Wrinkle.

John.—If it is true, he is a greater scoundrel than I imagined.

Wrinkle.—Quite likely; imagination is always below par.

John.—But I can hardly believe a man of his ability could contemplate such a ruinous action.

Wrinkle.—You will find, my young friend, that a man will often contemplate a ruinous action, which he knows to be ruinous conditionally, that is ruinous if discovered, if he has some strong motive; and so a ruinous action, committed by a man of great ability, becomes a matter of history. The size of the stakes, measures the height of the man, if played for a crown or a woman.

JOHN.—And that woman, Miss Brockholst—

WRINKLE.—Exactly; we will save her, and in doing so ruin him.

JOHN.—Do you not think he will demand our proofs of the charge? However if he learns we have discovered his true name—he may think we know all, and abandon his idea of marrying Miss Brockholst. When do you expect to see the detective?

WRINKLE.—This evening. He gives but little hopes of finding her. Will you walk down to the village with me for the mail? (*Exit.*)

JOHN.—Yes. (*Exit.*)

Enter Mrs. Morton.

How strangely destiny rules the world. I came into this little country place, to leave the great world behind me—or rather, to avoid those I knew. When all John's friends appear, I must go; but where, oh where can I fly? The world is so small for those who would disappear. Ah, (*Picking up shawl,*) this shawl is hers; around her it is a mantle for purity; around me, oh! I loved him—in the world's eyes, 'twas sin; which brought contempt on me. She did not—in the world's eyes, 'twas honorable; in heaven's—oh, what was it?

Enter Miss Brockholst.

Excuse me, you have my shawl, madame.

MRS. M.—Ah, I found it here; Miss Brockholst, I believe.

MISS B.—You have the advantage of me.

MRS. M.—Mrs. Morton.

MISS B.—Mrs. Morton, a friend; a friend of Mr. Melville's?

MRS. M.—The same.

MISS B. You can keep the shawl.

MRS. M.—Miss Brockholst, take your shawl. (*Emphatic.*)

MISS B.—It was given me by Mr. Melville; and since you have it now in your possession, you had better keep it.

MRS. M.—This is the first direct insult I have received in a very long time. You infer this shawl has been contaminated by my touch—you infer that I am a moral leper. So are you.

MISS B.—How dare you insult me?

MRS. M.—How dare you? I do not. I place you simply beside me on the moral platform. You read the social law, and I the law of heaven. I have broken that law, but not more than you.

MISS B.—What do you mean?

MRS. M.—Simply that you place the law of heaven be-

neath the law of man. Heaven crys out "without you love one another, there is no marriage." Man says, "having no legal obstacles two persons may be married." You would have married John Melville by the laws of man.

Miss B.—But I did not marry him.

Mrs. M.—No, but had he not lost his money you would have! You had promised to mary him;—the intent was there; 'tis for the intent, the wilful premeditation of an act to kill, the murderer is hung—so you are guilty.

Miss B.—I can not reason so quickly.

Mrs. M.—Then I will for you: another crime would have followed—the crime of false swearing. The false oath "to love, cherish, honor and obey," would have been on your lips, while your heart and conscience recorded the lie. Society applauds this act, and I am hissed because I loved and could not marry. For my class I do not plead social recognition. No—but Christian charity—If kindly voices called out to the sinking souls, "courage, courage," many wearied, fainting sisters would hope again. Oh, you women, sheltered from the cold, shielded from want, and freed from grinding labor, stand as examples before your laboring sisters, be representatives of womanhood. Think you, Miss Brockholst, a marriage for money inspires your maid servant with virtue? Does a legal paper satisfy your God? Ah well—I must not get excited. Women have always been hard judges on the faults of their own sex. Go! never marry without you love.

Miss B.—I see much truth in what you say, but my education has never tutored me to look at marriage in this light.

Mrs M.—The heart, not the mind, must choose its mate.

Miss B.—Forgive me for being harsh—here's my hand.

Mrs. M—No, it is unnecessary to shake hands. For an insult I could have a terrible vengeance on you; as it is—— well, never mind.

Miss B.—Won't you give me your hand?

Mrs. M.—Here, then; take the hand of a suffering woman. Ah, if the good women of the world but held out their hands to raise their unfortunate sisters, much sorrow and wickedness would disappear. Here. (*Hands shawl.*)

Miss B.—Thanks. (*Wraps it around her. Mrs. Morton starts to go into the house, Miss B. stops her.*) One moment Mrs. Morton, before you go. You say you could have a terrible vengeance on me. I do not know what you mean. I am surrounded with mystery. One more thing of mystery

will not cause me any fear. I am sorry for you, yes, sorry for you, from the bottom of my heart. I know what you have done for Mr. Melville—to make him what he is this very day, and I know of the good work you have given your life up to. You do this because you love John—and because you would atone with Heaven for your sin. Do not be harsh with me I am different than you think me.

Mrs. Morton.—I sincerely hope so—but how?

Miss Brockholst.—I would not tell you this but that I knew you did want John to marry me, (this is strictly secret). Do you remember the day Mr Melville's troubles got into the papers, and you went to him?

Mrs. Morton.—Very well.

Miss Brockholst.—That day he received a note from me breaking the engagement.

Mrs. Morton.—Yes, go on.

Miss Brockholst.—Do you know why I broke it off?

Mrs. Morton.—Yes, because his money had disappeared.

Miss Brockholst.—No, not at all; I said that but it was not so, you were the cause.

Mrs. Morton.—I the cause; how?

Miss Brockholst.—How? Well I was made to understand that Mr. Melville had not broken off with you as he had stated, nor did he intend to. During my engagement I had grown to love him—these reports grated on my feelings—at that time came the crash. My mother urged me to break off the match, and as long as he had not given you up, I would not let him think I cared for him.

Mrs Morton.—And you love him still, does he know it?

Mrs. Brockholst.—Here he comes, ask him. John.

Mrs. Morton.—*Mister* Melville, what's this I hear?

(*Enter*) John Melville.—Oh! you have met, have you? Well, is there anything left to John Melville, now?

Miss Brockholst.—Enough, I have just told her all about it, and that we love each other.

John Melville.—Yes, Ethel, when we last met I misjudged her, had you only allowed me to approach you during these two years I should have told you how I received a little note asking me to call, and, oh well, we found then we did love each other more than we thought for.

Mrs. Morton.—Why do you not announce it, nobody suspects it.

John Melville.—Nor must they.

Miss Brockholst.—No, not even my own family.

Mrs. Morton.—Why?

John Melville.—Because we are chasing the foxy Mr. Longstreet to cover, and he must not know we are on the scent. It is an easy run, for the scent is good.

Mrs. Morton.—These Wall street foxes are sly, run him hard and I will be in at the death.

John Melville.—You seem to really hate him.

Mrs. Morton.—I really think I do. (*Aside*). No one has better cause. I am so glad Mr. Melville, to think you are really in love, my prayer is being answered. I have prayed for this.

Miss Brockholst.—With John's consent we shall be as sisters, of your past remember but one thing, that is—

John Melville.—You saved me, let us all go now into the summer-house and have a little chat. (*Exit all Three.*)

Enter Longstreet and Mrs. Brockholst.

Longst.—Madam, I never advised you to speculate.

Mrs. B.—How can you say that sir? Did you not persuade me to "take a flyer," as you called it?

Longst.—Once only; only once—and then you made money.

Mrs. B.—Had I lost then I would not have been so daring afterwards. But to come to the point—I owe you $7,000: I can not pay it without telling my husband why I want it—and that I shall not do.

Longst.—As you please, madame; on the day I marry your daughter I will hand you your notes; should she refuse me, I will be compelled to write to your husband.

Mrs. B.—(*Defiantly.*) At that time I will tell my husband. I believe my losses were made by you intentionally, and shall persuade him not to pay you.

Longst.—In case of such an event, I will sue you first, and your husband afterwards. What a nice thing for your friends to read and chat over amongst themselves.

Mrs. B.—You would not dare do this.

Longst.—Oh yes, *I* dare *anything*, and why not this?

Mrs. B.—My friends, our friends, they are more mine than yours: will decide against you; and, sir, as you ambled into society, you will quietly trot out again.

Longst.—Ah well, even so, do not think my little entertainments will be neglected, simply because a shadow is thrown on me by the house of Brockholst. My dear madam, to an old skirmisher—

Mrs. B—Sir, do you remember to whom you speak?

Longst.—Perfectly; as I was about to say—an old skir-

misher like you, you must surely know that few people accept invitations out of regard to the invitor, but rather for their own gratification.

Mrs. B.—Well—

Longst.—Then mamma-in-law, as long as I entertain, my friends will be– legion.

Mrs. B.—I grant you this; but how can I make Leonie (*Enter Leonie at*) care for you?

Longst.—You cannot, but I may. Should you induce her to marry me, she might commence to have a feeling of attachment for me.

Mrs. B.—But she will not marry, I am afraid, without first having the feeling of attachment you speak of.

Longst.—She would have married Melville, and did not love him.

Mrs. B. –That affair has altered her mind in these matters.

Longst.—Her mind, her mind is but subject to your will. It is to compensate this exertion of will, I offer you the $7,000.

Mrs. B.—I am afraid her mind is beyond my will.

Lonst.—Bosh; her mind and her will are as pliable as those of a child.

Leonie, (*Coming forward*).—Perhaps, Mr. Longstreet.

Longst.—What—you here?

Mrs. B.—Have you heard all?

Leonie.—Perhaps you have not heard that some children are obstinate. So mother, by my marrying Mr Longstreet, you will earn $7,000. Are you not selling an heiress rather too cheap?

Mrs. B.—You do not understand.

Leonie.—Oh yes. This clear-headed gentleman, pays a brokerage of a few thousand dollars, to have me bring him as many a year. As to you, Sir, I think you contemptible.

Longst.—Really now, listen to me.

Leonie.—Not one word; you are beneath notice. But you mother, how could you bargain so?

Mrs. B.—Child, I owe him that money. I—seeing—(*Enter Mr. Wrinkle and John Melville.*) No intrusion gentlemen, you may listen to what I have to say. This man has induced me to speculate in Wall street. I have lost in money $5,000, and owe him $7,000, and he now threatens me.

Wrinkle.—If he can prove it has ever been lost, Mr. Melville and I will settle it; won't we Melville?

MELVILLE.—Yes, we will settle it; but the chances are it is in Longstreet's bank.

WRINKLE.—Not in Longstreet's, but Thompson's you mean. Eh—Thompson?

LONGST.—Sirs, how dare you—how dare you insult me?

WRINKLE.—Your tide is running out, Mr. Thompson. Better give us any claims you have against Mrs. Brockholst and go along with it, or you may get stranded.

LONGST.—I refuse to hold any conversation with you, and you madame; and as to the notes, I shall see your husband.

MRS. B.—If my husband must know, I shall tell him.

(*Enter*) MR. B.—Tell what? What does all this mean?

MELVILLE.—Do not be alarmed, 'tis nothing.

MISS B.—Oh mother!

MR. WRINKLE.—Your wife thought she would speculate, and did; loosing ten thousand dollars in money, and owes this man $7,000. He has been endeavoring to make her assist him in his wooing.

MR. B.—Oh then, this is what the money was for. If you had told me, I would have paid your debts, and showed you the folly of your actions.

LONGST.—(*to Leonie*) I love you truly, for yourself only. Truly, I do. Have you no love for me?

LEONIE.—Not as much as I have for a dog.

WRINKLE.—By the way, is it not rather risky for you to attempt to marry?

LONGST.—Why?

MELVILLE.—(*to Wrinkle.*) What nerve! (*To Longst.*) Can't you guess?

LONGST.—No.

MELVILLE.—We will for the sake of old times and to save the community, give you a chance. Leave the country at once, or—

LONGST. What infernal game is this?

MELVILLE.—A game suppressed by law, called bigamy in which a knave may sometimes control the suit of hearts.

LONGST.—You speak in riddles. I do not understand.

MELVILLE.—Of course not. Then to be plain, you, Mr. Longstreet; or rather, excuse me, you, Mr. Philip Thompson, are the knave who would marry that lady, which little game in the unmistakable language of the law, would be termed bigamy, for you now have a wife.

MRS. B.—He has a wife living?

MISS B.—He has a wife—the wretch.

MR. B.—You villian! What have you to say to this?

LONGST.—Some mistake sir. A confusion, I cannot explain. The erroneous information that my name is Thompson has led them astray. Such a man may have a wife; not I. not I.

WRINKLE.—(*Aside to Melville.*) We have forced him too soon. We can not prove what we say.

MELV.—Do not pile up a mass of falsehoods against yourself sir. Have you a wife? or have you ever been married?

LONGST.—No—upon my honor.

WRINKLE.—When a man like that talks of honor, you may be sure he is lying.

MR. B.—Give the man a chance—he may not be guilty.

Enter Lovell and Alice.

LOVELL, TO ALICE.—Something has gone wrong.

ALICE, TO MRS. B.—What's the matter?

LONGST.—I stand here charged of a great crime. I believe it a gigantic lie to ruin me. Your charge must be sustained, or I will order an action to be brought against you at once. If I have a wife, where is she? She is the proof you need—where is she?

Enter Mrs. M. unobserved.—Here!

LONGST.—You here, Edith! How came you here?

MELV.—You Ethel, his wife!

MRS. B. TO MISS B.—The villian——

WRINKLE.—Gad—and we had the proof all along. I must be getting old since I can no longer smell a mouse.

MRS. M.—Do not scorn me Philip Thompson, or be surprised at what I am; for what I am *you*, you have made me. Listen:—Ten years ago I left my father's house, that man's wedded wife. He promising to cherish, love, and protect me until death. I gave him my love, absolutely. I trusted myself implicitly to his keeping. A year of happiness glided past. The firm in which he was employed failed, and he left me, to seek employment in this city, in our little cottage alone with my baby. Time, ladden with my prayers for him, dragged wearily past. Thoughts of accident, and fears for his safety came over me—for I never received a single line. Poverty crept into the cottage. I went to work and earned but little. My thoughts were in the distant city. I arose one night, took my baby and fled into the great world. One moment I would cry out in agony, he is false—he has deserted me. The next my spirit would bid me hope; less something had happened—what, I could not imagine. My money was soon gone, my baby cried

for food, my clothes were pawned. I solicited work, but found none, and my baby starved at home. It was the old story of a mother's love, and a woman's shame. I obtained the money, but upon reaching home, found my baby dead, and my honor lost forever. My baby buried, in dispair I roamed the streets, and saw you, in evening dress, come out of a public restaurant with a lady—I fainted. I went mad. and you, John, saved me from a terrible death—

MELV.—And you—you saved me from a drunkard's grave. Let the past be buried. In the sight of an impartial, righteous, and supreme Justice,the sins that soil women's purity, equally stain the men's. For in the great judgment, the unjust verdict of custom will be over-ruled, and men and women must equally answer for the pure souls entrusted to their charge. Divine mercy will not be doled out in the measured and qualified standard of humanity. The pressure of circumstances, which you had not the strength to resist, will be considered. For that man's inhuman desertion you shall be freed by the courts.

MRS. BROCKHOLST.—Poor woman, how she must hate him.

MR. BROCKHOLST.—She has sufficient reason.

MRS. MORTON.--Hate, no, I loathe and despise him.

MELV.--But stop--do not leave us, Philip Thompson--though there is a person anxious for your safe keeping at the gate--for it will be a long time ere we all meet again.

WRINKLE.--When you practice signatures you should destroy the papers.

LONGST.--What new plot is this ?

BROCKHOLST---What more has this villain done ?

MELV.--He has learned to write other people's names, as well as his own.

Enter Detective.—Excuse me, gentlemen. Philip Thompson, I arrest you in the name of the law.

LONGST. --What for ?

DETECTIVE--For forging the signatures of Smithfield & Smithfield, ten years ago.

LONGST.--At last the storm has broken. Forgive me, Edith,for the misery I have caused you.

MRS. M.—For the misery, yes, I forgive as I hope for forgiveness.

DETECTIVE --Come, you are not wanted here.

MELVILLE.—Now Mr. and Mrs Brockholst, I have a little surprise in store for you, the platonic friendship, so to speak, existing between your daughter and myself, for the past two years has been—

WRINKLE.—Like all platonic friendships, a genuine—

MRS. MORTON.—Case of true love, where the outward and visible signs—

MRS. BROCKHOLST.—Social position—

MR. BROCKHOLST.—And dollars and cents—

MELVILLE.—Effectually conceal the inward and spiritual graces—

LOVELL.—Moral worth and—

ALICE.—True love—

MELVILLE.—This secret we have kept to entrap Longstreet. Now, since you have all had your little say, let me to you all, before Mrs. Morton, acknowledge that it is to her noble spirit any good there is in me has come.

MRS. MORTON.—Thanks John—I pray I may hear about me when I close my eyes in death, the voices of those suffering and sorrowing women to whom I have dedicated my life, declaring that my mission has been successful amongst them.

WRINKLE—Madam, Solomon Wrinkle is said to be as close a fisted old money grubber as there is in the land; but if you will kindly fill out some checks to suit yourself for your mission, on his bank, it would do him a world of good.

MRS MORTON.—When the Relief Mission needs money I shall certainly call upon you.

MELVILLE.—You have but to ask either my money or my services and they are yours.

LOVELL.—And do not forget me—

MRS. BROCKHOLST—And I will get you up a sewing class.

MISS BROCKHOLST.—Truly that is the stale brown bread of charity, Isn't it, John?

ALICE.—If I could do any personal good I would like to.

MRS. MORTON—That I hope you will by setting working women good examples—and by trying to raise the tone of society.

BROCKHOLST, (*Advancing to Mrs. M.*) I sincerely trust the future will be as bright as the past, now dead, was dark.

WRINKLE.—My friends, everything in life has its lights and shades, for the world is a see-saw, with its ups and downs. (*To Melville and Mrs. Morton.*) You have had yours, and those young people will have theirs. One thing remember—The matrimonial plank is the safest and smoothest for those who would not be "Married for Money."

Tableau.

THE END.

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